



*King Arthur*

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MATERIALS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING AT RUDOLF STEINER (WALDORF) SCHOOLS

# King Arthur

Retold by Caroline Steeden

Illustrated by Tony Morris

Annotations and exercises by Peter Morris

Edited by Christoph Jaffke in cooperation with the  
Pädagogische Forschungsstelle beim Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen  
Stuttgart 1997

*Scoala Waldorf  
Timisoara*



# THE SWORD IN THE STONE

**M**any years ago, there lived a great and noble king named Uther Pendragon. He ruled Britain wisely and brought peace to the land, after many years of war and suffering. He was helped by an adviser called Merlin the Enchanter, who made powerful magic.

Uther married a beautiful widow, called Igraine, who already had three daughters. After some time, Igraine gave birth to the king's son. But sadly, the baby had no time to bring his parents happiness as, soon after he was born, Merlin came to the king with terrible news.







"King Uther," said Merlin, "as you know, I can see into the future. Very soon you will become ill with a fever and you will die. It will be a terrible time and there will be great wars in Britain. Your son will be in danger, as many of your enemies will want to kill him. You must let me take him away to a secret place where he can live safely until he becomes a grown man."

Uther and Igraine were filled with sadness, but they trusted Merlin, and knew what he told them would come true. "You must take our child to safety," said King Uther. "No harm must come to him, for he has the best chance of bringing peace to Britain in the future."

So, one dark night, Merlin took the baby down a secret path and through the forest. He took him far away to the castle of a good knight called Sir Hector, who promised to take care of him, as if he were his own son. Merlin told Sir Hector to name the baby Arthur.



Soon afterwards, the king fell into a fever and died, just as Merlin had said he would. The next eighteen years were terrible. There were many wars, and castles and villages were burned and destroyed. The people needed a strong ruler to bring peace to the land once more.





Merlin decided the time had come to reveal the secret he had kept for the last eighteen years. He went to London with a message for the Archbishop of Canterbury. Lords, ladies and peasants from all over the land came to hear what he had to say.

"I have great news," said Merlin. "This land will soon have a new king, who will be even wiser and nobler than Uther Pendragon. The new king will bring peace and order to this land troubled by war and hunger."

Merlin told the archbishop to gather all the knights of the realm in his cathedral on Christmas Day for a special service.



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When they arrived at the cathedral, the knights found a marble rock outside, with a shining sword buried deep within it. They were astonished, and crowded round to see the wonderful sword, which had a golden handle set with precious jewels. A message was written at the bottom of the rock:







The knights that were gathered there all tried to pull the sword from the stone. They huffed and puffed and pulled with all their might, but no one could budge the sword an inch!

The archbishop decided to send messengers across the land announcing a tournament on New Year's Day, when all could try to draw the sword from the stone.



On the day of the tournament, knights came from far and wide. Amongst them was Sir Hector with his son, Sir Kay, and his adopted son, Arthur, who by now was eighteen years old. There was to be much swordplay and jousting that day, and on the way there, Sir Kay realised he had left his sword at home. Sir Arthur rode back to fetch it, but found the gates locked, and no one there. He remembered passing a churchyard where he had seen a sword stuck in a stone, and, not wanting to disappoint his brother, rode quickly to the churchyard. With little effort he pulled the sword smoothly from the stone. Arthur had not heard the stories about the sword, and was unaware of the importance of his actions.





Sir Kay recognised the sword at once, and handed it to his father, saying, "Father, here is the sword from the stone. I must be the rightful King of Britain!"

Sir Hector looked doubtfully at his son and asked if he could swear truthfully that he had removed the sword himself. Sir Kay could not do so, and told his father that Arthur had given it to him.

"Where did you get it from, Arthur?" asked his father.

"I pulled it from the stone in the churchyard," replied Arthur.

Sir Hector rode back to the churchyard with his sons and all of the other knights. They watched in amazement as Arthur replaced the sword, and then, the other knights having tried and failed once more to remove it, he stepped forward and swiftly slid the sword from the stone. The sword shone brightly as Arthur held it high in his right hand. Britain had a new king! ←

